

Waiting

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Summary: Waiting...There really wasn't anything else to do. And while she waited she thought, about him.

Waiting

Let's see, I don't know why I wrote this. I beat Halo 3 and this came to mind. Now before anyone reads on this takes place after the game, and I do mean the very end. If you have not watched till the end of the credits, chances are you won't have a clue what's going on. But any way, read and review peoples.

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Waiting

She sat there, really. Every second of every minute of every hour of every day of every year. Since there was nothing else to do except check the beacon that she dropped. But she didn't bother with that any more, at first it was so that she could think about other things. But as time passed she found herself staring at him. How long had it been now? The years all seemed to blur together.

"_Wake me when you need me."_ He had said just before he went into cryostasis.

And she needed him. Just to talk to him. But that would be selfish of her. Putting her needs before his own survival. His armor had a limited supply of air. And it was already running dangerously low when he woke up. So she sat there, legs curled up to her chest, arms circling her legs. And she stared at him, wishing, _hopping_ that someone, _anyone_, would find them.

There she goes again, being selfish. But was it so wrong to want to talk to him? Was it so wrong that she wanted to hear his voice? Was it so wrong to want to _talk_ to someone else other then herself? No,

she didn't think it was. But the fear that he would run out of air kept her from unfreezing him. True she could re-seal him in the cryo-tube if she had to, but she didn't want to chance it.

Didn't want to chance it? Weren't those her words on _High Charity_? Didn't she tell him to leave her there because _she didn't want to chance a remote activation_? This whole mess was her fault. If only she didn't force him to leave her behind. Then the Gravemind would never have gotten into some of her files. It never would have made its way to Earth and it never would have gone through the portal. And if it never went through the portal then it never would have landed on the Arc.

But that was dangerous thinking, the _"what ifs"_. It served no purpose then to make her depressed. To make her remember all of her mistakes. To cause her to blame herself for all of this. To regret all the decisions she had to make. So she tried to think of something else. And she considered her feelings.

Strange, really, that an A.I. would ever have feelings. Because that's not what A.I.s were made for. They were made to aid ships and their captains. They were never supposed to get attached to _anything_. Before the _Pillar of Autumn_, she went through a few ships. Then she stuck with him, aiding him and the other marines on Halo. How did she come to care for him? Oh, that's right, being in ones head can do that to someone. But that wasn't the first time she had been with him.

The first time she had seen him was on Reach, when the Spartan II project first started. She was still working with her 'mother', Dr. Halsey, on the then young soon to be Spartans. Dr. Halsey had told her countless times that she could be paired up with any one of the Spartans, but none had caught her eye like he did. He was taller, stronger than the rest even as a kid. She never really could remember what she saw in him that the others didn't. Oh, wait, it was luck wasn't it. He was lucky, the others weren't.

Others would have called her crazy, and maybe she was. But she watched him grow into the Spartan that he needed to be. And that was when she first started to care for him. How she worried when he went into those simulations wondering if he'll be fine. Though she knew he couldn't die in those simulations she knew if he didn't pass them he could die in real combat. When he was in the infirmary she would stand there watching as he was patched up from what they call a 'friendly' spare. She swore they were all trying to kill each other with how they fought in those.

Then the time came for him to be deployed in real combat, and she had to hope for the best. When he came aboard the _Autumn_, she was content on knowing that he was safe and she could look out for him. When they were stranded on Halo, she never slept. Even when he took a few naps to recover his strength, she was on alert, constantly scanning the area for any threats. Whenever his shields dropped she'd yell at him to take cover and give them time to recharge. If he was injured she'd panic and tell him to get the hell out of there.

Through thick and thin they were together. Any missions he'd been on she'd be there with him. He'd brighten her day and she'd brighten his. But what was she thinking forcing him to leave her behind while

he dealt with Truth? Why didn't she go with him? Did she seem like the suicidal type? She knew destroying High Charity would destroy her, so why did she remain? Was it because it was her duty to protect the human race? No that wasn't the reason and she knew it.

She was trying to protect him even if it killed her. Because if Halo was fired then he would die, but because she was an A.I she wouldn't be killed in the blast. She would rather delete herself then to watch him die. The other A.I.s she got to know under her 'mother' would call her crazy. But she had something that the others didn't. She was given the ability to feel like a human. It's part of the reason why she can feel so deeply for him.

But she was getting off track—wasn't she? Time seemed to pass by so slowly that she could never remember what she was thinking. But that's all she had to do. To think and rant inside her head. Ranting, that's all she ever did now a days. By god did she want to talk to him, even if only for a few minutes. But there was another reason she wanted to talk to him one last time. She wanted to talk to him before she 'died'.

Ironical, really, that she being a smart A.I. means she could act like a normal human. But whereas humans have years to live, she only had seven before she gathers too much information and starts to break up from all the information. So how many years has it been since she was created? How long had she been 'alive'? She couldn't remember. It seemed harder for her to remember a lot ever since the Gravemind got into her files. So the only question was "How much time was left?" She could only answer herself with a "You don't want to know."

No, she wouldn't go without speaking to him one last time. She needed to tell him—everything. She needed to just talk to him. So she unfroze him. The cryo-tube opening with a hiss. After a few seconds his head turned to face her. And she smiled a smile she hadn't smiled in years. She could have made a sarcastic comment had circumstances been different. So she settled with saying, "John, there's something I needed to tell you."

He didn't respond, but then she really didn't think that he would. He was always the quiet one, even when he was a kid. So instead of saying anything he simply nodded his head, and she told him. She told him about what would eventually happen to her, when the seven years were up. He was silent through out the whole tale just like she knew he would be. Once she was finished telling her tale she allowed him a few moments to think through it all.

Then she said, "John, in case we don't make it—"

She was interrupted by him saying, "We'll make it."

"John—I—" she couldn't bring herself to say it. Why damn it?! WHY! Why couldn't she say three simple words? Was it because she knew she would 'die' before he did? Did she not want to hurt him? Yes! Yes she didn't want to hurt him. She cared too much for him to hurt him like that.

"Cortana," his voice slicing through her thoughts, "You know you can tell me anything. But hold out hope that we'll make it through this."

She remained silent for a few minutes. But then her lips moved without her telling them to and her voice spoke for her, "I love you, John." Not giving him time to reply, not wanting to know his answer, she resealed him in the cryo-tube. And with that she found herself feeling much better. Like a weight had been lifted off her shoulders. And she resumed her thinking, her staring, but it was with a happy note. A cheerfulness was in her eyes that was never there before just now.

And she waited.

End
file.